

Bruno Horta Liza

Conference Plan

(Week 8)

LAC E-tutoring Certificate Course ETCS111

November 2010

Part 1

Group Profile

This group is composed of 8 native speakers of Brazilian Portuguese. They are all young adults, aged 18-22. They are advanced learners pursuing the Cambridge CPE. The course is a F2F exams preparation one with two lessons per Saturday. Six students are at college (Law and Computer Science) and two are sitting the national exams to enter college. Despite their personal agendas, they're interested and committed.

Objectives

By the end of this conference learners will have practised CPE Paper 3, Part 5 (*summary writing task*) by:

- discussing the qualities of a good summary (E1)
- learning the do's and don'ts of the exam task (E2)
- analysing sample summaries with a step-by-step plan; (E3)
- having exam task practice followed by reflection (E4)

Materials

- Moodle
- CPE handbook and exam task
- Websites on summary writing
- Video (spark)

Anticipated problems

Technology cannot be a hindrance for participants. A careful and balanced selection of group members based on their IT skills will be the first step. Owing to that, an online survey (<http://cpeonlinemodule.questionpro.com>) will be required beforehand. The results will help in the group division according to IT competence.

Despite being digital natives, some students might not be comfortable using cyberspace with an educational purpose. In this case, I should intervene offering guidance and support. Should technical

difficulties arise, swimmers will be required to help. I will also be on standby in case extra help is required. Personal agendas may be another problem, so bigger deadlines were set to allow them to participate.

Activities:

Total Conference time: 2 weeks

Total Learning time: 4 hours

E-tivity 1

Post 1 (Individually)

Learner: read two websites about writing summaries and post 3 qualities of good summaries.

Post 2 (Individually)

Learner: respond to another learner's post and comment on what they find especially difficult. Add journal entry.

Tutor: open and organise conference; weave and summarise forum.

E-tivity 2

Post 1 (Group)

Learners: read CPE handbook excerpt and post a list of **DO'S** and **DONT'S** applied to summary task.

Post 2 (Individually)

Learner: choose one piece of advice and comment on it. Add journal entry.

Tutor: organise groups, summarise forum with a compilation of **DO'S** and **DONT'S**.

E-tivity 3

Post 1 (Group)

Learners: analyse summary task question and design a step-by-step plan on how to approach it.

Post 2 (Individually)

Learner: respond to the other group's post.

Post 3 (Individually)

Learner: read texts about *colours* and analyse the sample summaries. Discuss and post merits and faults of each.

Post 4 (Individually)

Learner: respond to one peer, commenting on his/her analysis. Add journal entry.

Tutor: open and summarise forum.

E-tivity 4

Post 1 (Individually)

Learner: Read texts, write a summary using the plan from E3.

Post 2 (Individually)

Learner: Comment on a summary task from a colleague.

Tutor: open, weave and summarise forum.

Reflections

Learner: post conference reflections

Tutor: weave students' reflections

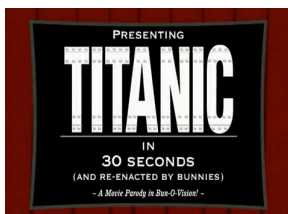
Part 2 - Instructions

E-tivity 1 (45' online time)

Purpose: to discuss features of a good summary

Welcome to our conference!

Practically anything can be summarised as long as one has got the right skills. Even a 3-hour film can be reduced to 30 seconds. Check it out!



In E-tivity 1 we look at qualities of a good summary.

P1. Read texts **A/B** (group 1) **C/D** (group 2) and individually **post 3 qualities of a good summary** mentioned in either text. Title accordingly.

P2. In a **second new post**, individually respond to one colleague from the other group and comment on what you find especially difficult/relevant. Title accordingly.

Wait for your tutor to summarise forum ideas and add relevant notes to your journal.

E-tivity 2 (45' online time)

Purpose: to understand what to do in the CPE summary task

Welcome to E-tivity 2!

P1. Read the information from the CPE handbook about Paper 3 Part 5. Make a list of **DO'S** and **DON'TS** for this task. E-mail your team mates your list. Compare and discuss contributions, then decide on **one list** and select a representative to **post** it to the forum.

P2. In a **separate post**, respond to the other group's list. Reply appropriately to the messages your group received.

Wait for your tutor to summarise ideas and add notes to your journal.

E-tivity 3 60' online time

Purpose: to devise a step-by-step approach to summaries and analyse samples

Welcome to E-tivity 3!

P1. Read the texts and summary task below and devise a step-by-step approach to it. As a group, compare and discuss the contributions, then decide on **one approach**. Another representative posts it to the forum.

P2: In the other group's thread, individually comment on their post.

P3. Read the texts about. Choose and analyse **two** sample summaries, discuss and individually post the merits and faults (if any) of each.

P4. Individually comment on two different analyses.

E-tivity 4 60' online time

Purpose: to practice Summary task

Welcome to E-tivity 4!

P1. Use the plan from E3 and answer the summary question attached. Individually post your summary. Title accordingly.

P2. Comment on a summary task from a colleague, pointing out strengths and areas for improvement. Wait for your tutor to provide the answer key and compare.

Reflections 30' online time

Hi there! You've made it to the end of our online module! Congratulations! 🏆

P1. Please think about your experience over the past days and post reflections to the conference in the Reflection Room. Think about how you progressed. Log in later and read the other reflections.

Part 3 - Rationale

Needs x lesson objectives

The course students take reflects their needs, specific exam practice in order to pass the test. Practice and feedback indicate **Paper 3 Part 5** requires further practice, especially because of its difficulty and the number of marks it involves (14/22). Therefore, an online component for this F2F course meets their needs: exam-oriented extra practice, and online, as they have no more time for F2F meetings.

Principles underlying the plan

Knowledge scaffolding is the basis for this plan. Learning with and from others is what will move students. Also, with a bottom-up approach, I intend to make students understand in detail what is required in the exam. E-tivities therefore were designed with a logical sequence. As for e-tutor roles, I believe facilitator and summariser will be the most important ones.

Word count: 1047

APPENDIX:

Video Spark: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36Z-mY3kUlk> (E-tivity 1)

Sites on summary writing (E-tivity 1)

- A. <http://web.hc.keio.ac.jp/~hjb/How%20to%20write%20a%20summary.html>
- B. <http://www.enotes.com/topics/how-write-summary>
- C. <http://www.suite101.com/content/how-to-write-an-effective-summary-a186204>
- D. <http://www.srjcwrittingcenter.com/summaries/summaries.html>

CPE Handbook Excerpt (E-tivity 2)

PAPER 3 USE OF ENGLISH

PART 5

Task type and focus	Comprehension questions and summary writing task. The focus of the questions is on awareness of the use of language (recognising and understanding the force of lexical items, rhetorical and stylistic devices and referencing). The focus of the summary is on information selection, linking and sentence construction.
Format	Two texts with two questions on each text. The summary task requires selection of relevant information from both texts.
No. of Qs	4. 1 summary writing task.

■ PART 5 – COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS AND SUMMARY WRITING TASK

In this part, the focus of the comprehension questions is on awareness of the use of language (recognising and understanding the force of lexical items, rhetorical and stylistic devices and referencing). The focus of the summary question is on information selection, linking and sentence construction.



The four comprehension questions (40–43) each receive 2 marks.



14 marks are available for the summary question (44): up to 4 marks may be awarded for content and up to 10 marks for summary writing skills.

Part 5 consists of two texts from different sources which represent different treatment of the same topic. Complete sentences are not required; some questions can be answered by a short phrase or a single word. Candidates must write their answers on Answer Sheet 2.

Question 44, the summary task, tests candidates' ability to select appropriate information from the two texts, and to organise it into a well-constructed and grammatically accurate summary of between 50 and 70 words. The paragraph must be written in complete sentences and should be in a formal/neutral register. All the information required is found in the texts and candidates are not expected to offer their own opinion. The task focus is on productive language, so texts will be well within the reading competence of candidates at this level. Candidates must write their answer on Answer Sheet 2.

Details of the assessment of the summary writing task are given on page 44.

In a paragraph of **50 – 70** words, summarise **in your own words as far as possible** the reasons given in **both** texts to explain why some colours have long-established names in English and others have only been named more recently. Write your summary **on the separate answer sheet**.

Text 1

One area in which the English language seems surprisingly lacking is colour, and the colour vocabulary we do possess is surprisingly recent: 'pink' and 'orange', for instance, were unknown definitions before the 17th century. Hitherto, such colours had been regarded merely as shades of red, yet so limited was their use that people managed to talk about them quite adequately without needing to be more precise. Today's requirements are more complex, however, and in our attempts to distinguish between the myriad variations of blues and greens, reds and purples that modern chemistry has produced, we often fall back on nature to provide a benchmark. A soft crimson might be described as 'raspberry', for instance, a scarlet as 'geranium'.

But what if it is the colours of the natural world itself that we are trying to describe? What if we are trying to find a rose in a particular shade of pink to match an interior design or a wedding outfit? And, indeed, what if a plant nursery has grown two new strains of geranium which could both be loosely described as scarlet and needs to differentiate between them for the benefit of a customer on the phone? In other words, how do we identify subtle gradations of colour in a way that's simple, reliable and universal? There is only one answer to this question: the Horticultural Colour Chart, the standard work of reference for plant colour identification. The latest edition, the most comprehensive yet, gives a definitive name to 884 separate colours.

Text 2

Artists have always been enchanted by the colour blue. Yet fine blues have always been difficult to obtain from natural sources, and painters and textile dyers throughout the ages have often found themselves at the mercy of what contemporary chemical technology could offer. The first blue pigments were simply ground-up coloured minerals dug from the earth. But there aren't many which are suitable, so there are no blues in ancient cave art, for example, and until relatively recently, blue has tended to be curiously under-represented in art.

Indeed, the very concept of 'blue' has an ambiguous past. The word 'blue' in English is said to have derived from a Latin word meaning, of all things, 'yellow', and some languages do not even have a word for blue at all. According to anthropologists, it is the last of the primary colours to be represented in the colour terminology of many languages: even words for 'green' appear before those for 'blue', for example. This seems odd: after all, the sky and the sea can fill our horizon with blue, yet blue wasn't clearly established as a primary colour until the 17th century. One factor in the colour's lowly status may be that our eyes' sensitivity to different colours is weakest in the blue-violet part of the visible spectrum, so that a rich blue does not strike us with the same bright impact as a strong yellow or red. Maybe this is why some ancient civilisations considered blue to be light black and did not include the colour in their palettes at all.

Summary Samples (E-tivity 3)

(A)

Some colours have not been for a long period in English. But there are some reasons for that. Firstly, they did not need to precise an object's colour as its use was limited and people could understand each other without identifying the colour. Moreover, people had in their minds a specific shape wanted a specific name. They wanted the correct name. Secondly, the chemical technology helped "painters and textile dyers" to dye with contemporary colours. The last reason is in the "eye's sensitivity". Ancient people could not easily recognise the difference between two colours as it did not "strike" them.

(B)

Before 17th century, because some colours did not be used enough, people did not need to be more accurate when they referred to these colours. Nowadays the situation is more complex. Modern chemistry has produced many colours, which take their names after nature. Moreover, back in those days the chemical technology was not so developed. In addition to all these, human eye is not so sensitive to every kind of colour in the visible spectrum and for that reason some colours do not have the same bright influence like others.

(C)

The reasons that explain why some colours have only been named in English more recently are as follows: 1) some colours were considered as shades of the primary ones because of their rarity. 2) the variety of colours depends on the technological process. 3) some colours were in rare raw materials. 4) human vision is less sensitive in some parts of the visible spectrum. So the long-established colour names in English are the names of the primary colours depending on the use of each one of them throughout English history

(D)

In the first text the writer says that, in the past, there were colours that were not often found in people's discussions, so there wasn't a need to name them, and if there was, they were named as shades of other colours. In the second text the writer talks about a biological reason and he says that the eye isn't very sensitive in some colours, so people weren't interested in naming them.

Text 1

Twenty years ago, a girl would have got her first Barbie doll at seven or eight and would have played with her almost into her teenage years. Today, most three-year-olds own at least one. At six, a girl is deemed too sophisticated for an ordinary Barbie, so she is lured by a range of street-smart topical dolls. At eight, she diversifies into Barbie clothing, toiletries, electronics and computer software.

5

The Barbie fatigue shown by those aged over eight is not an isolated phenomenon – the toy industry says that is when traditional toys of any kind lose their appeal. Nowadays there are too many other things competing for children's attention and pocket money: computer software, fast food, pop music and clothes. In an effort to hold on to their increasingly sophisticated young customers, many toy companies are resorting to gimmicks, such as a new trading card series for girls featuring pictures of real boys. As well as trading the cards, little girls can pick out the perfect boyfriend for themselves or their chums.

10

Arguably, being supply-led, not demand-led, the toy industry is partly to blame for its own troubles. As with fashion, the industry decides what is going to be in the shops eighteen months down the line. No matter how much is spent on marketing or how carefully supply is controlled, children don't always do what toymakers want or expect. The industry was initially taken by surprise by the Pokemon craze and the fact that it was the trading cards which proved much more popular with children than the Nintendo electronic game.

15

Text 2

Films are important toy-sellers. Representatives of the toy trade were at final script meetings of the Star Wars movies and characters would have their roles expanded, reduced or even cut depending on how 'sellable' they were expected to be. Shameless movie merchandising is now so accepted that film scriptwriters can even share a knowing joke with the audience. In *Toy Story 2*, the heroes enter a toy warehouse and gasp at the shelves filled with thousands of Buzz Lightyear dolls. Their Barbie tour guide comments 'In 1995, manufacturers failed to anticipate demand, so this time round we're prepared'. We laugh, but Disney and toymaker Mattel hope we will buy one anyway.

5

Merchandising can be tremendously profitable for the licence-holders, but is nevertheless a gamble. Although Disney has had some very lucrative merchandising successes, notably *The Lion King*, others, such as *Mulan*, had toys gathering dust on the shelves. US toymaker Hasbro got the licence for the latest Star Wars movie, *The Phantom Menace*, and in the expectation of making at least \$750 million, spent a fortune on promotion. In the event, they made only \$600m – not exactly a flop, but certainly a disappointment.

10

For the retailers, however, even successful merchandising is a mixed blessing. Although toys sold on the back of successful films, books or TV programmes bring customers into the shops, profit margins, never big at the best of times, are especially low on 'hyped' goods. Furthermore, if a toy which is the current fad has sold out, customers feel resentful, which is bad for future business.

15

Summary writing

In a paragraph of between 50 and 70 words, summarise, in your own words as far as possible, the problems faced by manufacturers and retailers in the toy industry.

Conference Plan: E-tivities deadlines

■ E-tivity 1
 ■ E-tivity 2
 ■ E-tivity 3
 ■ E-tivity 4
 ■ Reflections

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
WEEK 1		E1 - Post 1 Deadline 8 p.m.	E1 - Post 2 Deadline 8 p.m.	E2 - Post 1 Deadline 8 p.m.	E2 - Post 2 Deadline 8 p.m.	E3 - Post 1 Deadline 8 p.m.	
WEEK 2	E3 - Post 2 Deadline 8 p.m.	E3 - Post 3 Deadline 8 p.m.	E3 - Post 4 Deadline 8 p.m.	E4 - Post 1 Deadline 8 p.m.	E4 - Post 2 Deadline 8 p.m.		REFLECTIONS